



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

## ***Executive Office of Health & Human Services***

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### **Department of Elderly Affairs Press Release**

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**For: Immediate Release**  
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#### **Department of Elderly Affairs Receives Funding from Administration on Aging for “Live and Learn Program”**

The Department of Elderly Affairs was notified the “Live and Learn Program” was approved for federal innovation grant funding from the Administration on Aging.

“Live and Learn”, developed in partnership with the Alzheimer’s Association, Rhode Island Chapter, is a program for individuals with early stage memory loss. The program offers meaningful activities for individuals experiencing early memory loss and much needed respite for their caregivers.

“Last year, more than 30 individuals in our pilot program were able to participate in small group activities at the Kent County or Mount Hope YMCA and at the Warwick Public Library,” said Corinne Calise Russo, Director of the Department of Elderly Affairs. “With the new federal grant award, we can expand the program into new communities, increase the number of individuals who participate, and offer the program in new venues.”

Individuals participating in the Live and Learn Program choose from a variety of structured activities such as exercise programs through the YMCAs, guest speakers at public libraries, craft classes, and a pet therapy program. In addition to offering four to eight hours of structured activities per week for individuals, Live and Learn provides four to eight hours of much needed respite to the caregivers.

“The goal here is for individuals with early stage memory loss to maintain their level of functioning and their engagement with the community, said Liz Morancy, Executive Director of the Alzheimer’s Association, Rhode Island Chapter. “The social interaction and support has proven to be of great value to the individuals in the program.

Rhode Island is one of twenty-two states that have been awarded funding through the 2008 Innovative Grant through the Alzheimer’s Demonstration grant program.

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Currently, there are 25,000 Rhode Islanders diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. The current trend toward early detection and the continued use of medication to slow down progression are allowing persons to remain in the early stages of the disease for a longer period of time.

For further information, please contact the Rhode Island Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association at **401-421-0008**.

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